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*Serving your informational, reference and reading needs.*

## **MEMORIAL HALL LIBRARY**

Elm Square

Andover, Massachusetts 01810



*"Andover, everywhere and always, first and last, she has been the manly, straightforward, sober, patriotic New England town."*

--Rev. Phillips Brooks, circa 1880



## THE SHIFTING SKYLINE

In the early years of Andover's known history, thought to have begun with the arrival of the white settlers from Ipswich about 1641 in the area called Cochickewicke, trees formed the only skyline. Indians and deer roamed the fields and waded in the slowly flowing rivers.

Two hundred years later, in the industrial era of the 1800's, mill chimneys rose high above the trees and the town divided in two, forming Andover and North Andover. Congregational church steeples cast themselves against the sky and paths became roads to accommodate the horse and buggy. Later, tracks were installed for the train and trolley. Farms and businesses thrived, as did the academies, Phillips and Abbot, and the Andover Theological Seminary.



*"Located within commuting distance of Boston but economically a part of the Lawrence metropolitan area, Andover has been absorbed by neither, retaining its individuality and its small town characteristics to a marked degree."*

--Library Education in Action Study, 1954



Elm Square in 1909

*Elm Square, 1909*

Historically, Andover used to be described as a symbol of New England and all that the term embodied: first and foremost Yankee, Republican, Congregational, conservative, smug, bucolic, practical and typically American.

During the past century, however, the town has grown and changed. The Andover-Newton Theological School was removed to Newton in 1910. Abbot was absorbed by Phillips in 1973. Although many of the steeples and towers of the early churches and schools still stand tall today, the land is now ribboned with highways and spotted with homes, small businesses, and large industrial plants. Common ancestry and tradition have been rapidly fading. The excitements of the past--the Underground Railroad, the Abolitionist Movement, Harriet Beecher Stowe's writing, Samuel Francis Smith's composing "My Country 'Tis of Thee," the musterings on the Common for the Revolution and the Civil War, and the controversies of the Mill, the Hill and the Till--are only curiosities to the latest generation of Andoverites.



The growth of the electronics-based industries brings many new families to Andover from all over the country and the world. This newer population--which reflects a wealth of young, well-educated professionals--brings with it new attitudes and a more cosmopolitan outlook. This fresh vision blends well with the town's historical pride: Andover views its future with an active interest in preserving its past. Through its Town Meeting system, coupled with a modernized Town Manager form of government created in 1956, the town works to maintain the pastoral atmosphere of a residential community originally endowed with an abundance of natural beauty, even as it encourages the orderly, planned growth of clean industry.



*Elm Square today*



## IN MEMORIAM

Memorial Hall Library received its first impetus in 1870 from John Smith, a wealthy Andover mill owner. Although he had had no formal education, Smith proposed to donate \$25,000--providing the town would raise an equal amount--for the erection and establishment of a library and reading room. When the contributions of the townspeople fell a few thousand dollars short of the goal, someone remembered that there was a soldier's monument fund, established to honor the Civil War dead, just waiting for a purposeful way to be spent. And so it was that the War of the Rebellion, as it was then called, indirectly resulted in the building of Andover's first public library. When it was completed, the "Memorial Hall" displayed engraved marble plaques which honored the town's Civil War veterans and listed the names of those who had died, with the place and manner of their deaths.

*Portrait of founder John Smith, in its present location in the November Club Lounge*

*"...to make the Library and Reading Room in the largest degree useful to the greatest number of the living citizens of Andover, young and old, as a new center of historic treasures and popular culture..."*

--Statement of purpose of the first trustees' Special Report, 1872



A social library already existed in 1770 in North Andover, then a part of Andover. There had been a small private circulating library association, begun in 1840 in Frye Village (now Shawsheen); also, there was the Brechin Library of the Andover Theological Seminary and a few other social libraries. The Memorial Hall Library was completed at a time when the idea of a free library was just becoming popular. On May 30th, 1873, it opened its doors, following a parade and a flowery dedicatory address by famed orator Phillips Brooks. At the helm was Ballard Holt, 2nd, who had been duly appointed Librarian and Janitor.



*Ballard Holt, 2nd., Librarian from 1873 to 1906.*

In 1906, Edna A. Brown became the Librarian, while Mr. Holt continued to serve as Janitor. Miss Brown, the author of numerous children's books--many of which were written during her tenure at the library --retired in 1939. She was succeeded by Miriam Putnam, who served for 28 years, during which she improved, strengthened and enlightened the library scene in Andover as well as throughout the Commonwealth. From her retirement in 1967, to 1974, A.J. Anderson, Frances Bold, and Harry Sagris served in turn as Director, each bringing the force of his or her own personality to the issues at hand. Since 1974, Nancy C. Jacobson has continued the tradition.

Under the far-seeing, energetic and responsive leadership of its past directors, Memorial Hall grew and progressed to become an outstanding library. Its one hundredth anniversary in 1973 provided an opportunity for a mutual celebration of patrons, staff and trustees, enthusiastically supported by the citizens of Andover.



Rules and Regulations  
1873



"Memorial Hall and Reading-room shall be free to all Residents in Andover over 14 years of age."

"No Person shall lunch or smoke or spit on the floor in any part of the Building."



"No Person shall be allowed to have more than one volume from the Library at any one time."



## CHANGING WITH THE TIMES



*The Original Memorial Hall Library*



*The Library after 1927 addition*



*1942: The cannons are scrapped to aid the war effort*

Even as the collections at Memorial Hall have changed from the early days, when more religious books could be found on the shelves than any other category, save fiction, the building itself has undergone a number of metamorphoses. An iron fence once surrounded the front of the library to keep out wandering cows. A horse watering trough with a faucet and a cup for the drivers' use later became a drinking fountain. Two cannons once seen on the lawn were carted away for scrap iron in World War II.

Four additions were made to the building in the twentieth century. In 1927, the Victorian roofline was modified to a more Georgian design, and a Children's Room was added.

In 1961, the Children's Room was enlarged and the work area was increased. A reading room addition was completed in 1966. And, on October 30, 1988, the year of its 115th anniversary, the Memorial Hall Library was rededicated following three and one-half years of construction, which added a new rear wing to the renovated original building and more than doubled the library's size to provide space, not only for its patrons, but for its advanced technological equipment.



*The Library after 1966 addition*



*Memorial Hall Library today*





In Andover fashion, the library as it now stands blends the future with the past. Through the library's automated system, a patron can locate the latest videocassette--or works by Stowe, Alcott, Hugo, Dickens, Lord Byron or the Brontes, books that could be found in the original Memorial Hall collection --and check them out with a library card that is "read" by laser scanner. He or she may choose to relax on a modern overstuffed chair in one of the airy main reading rooms, beside a display case filled with contemporary sculpture, or to hide away in the quiet of the November Club lounge, a 19th-century-style study dominated by the portrait of founder John Smith.



*The groundbreaking: 1985*



*Cutting the ribbon on the new addition: 1987*

*1985 through 1988:*



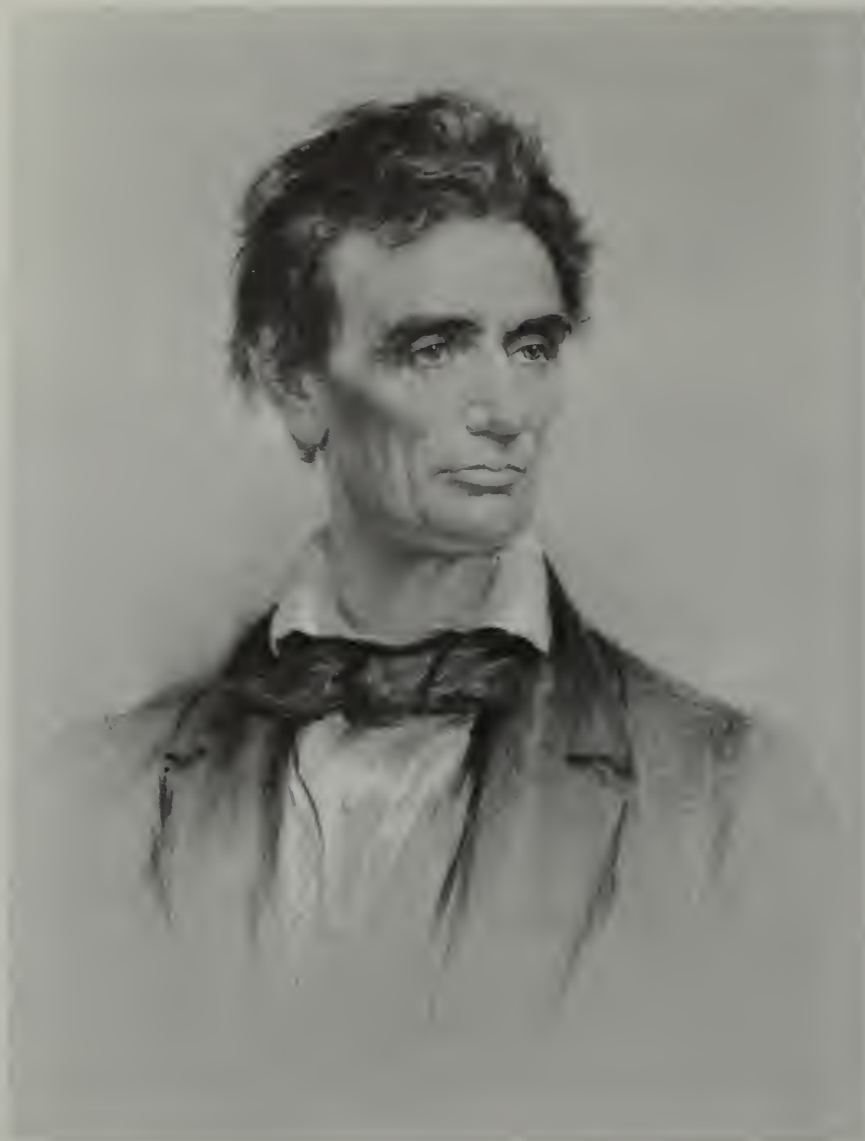
*Finished at last:  
the Dedication Gala,  
October 30, 1988*



*Frederik A. Allis, Jr., former Trustee Chairman,  
addresses the crowd in the renovated Memorial Hall*



*The library grows again*



*"They want my head, do they!"*

--A. Lincoln to Charles Barry

A portrait of a brooding Abraham Lincoln looks down upon library patrons from the wall of the main reading room. It is fitting that the library, with its ties to Lincoln's era, should be so fortunate as to have this charcoal drawing, drawn in Springfield by Charles Barry in 1860, before Lincoln left for Washington to assume the presidency. Barry had been commissioned by prominent Massachusetts Republicans to do the work, which was, according to Lincoln, the first likeness of him done from life. The portrait was received by the library in 1916 as a bequest of George Henry Torr of Andover.

In 1946, Miriam Putnam, then Library Director, read a newspaper article describing a "missing portrait" in the history of Lincoln; she immediately recognized it as the one in the library. Several authorities verified that it was, indeed, the long-lost portrait. The missing links in its travel from the hands of the artist to the walls of Memorial Hall Library have yet to be discovered.

## SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

Car repair, antique prices, navigational techniques, solar house plans, organic gardening, college entrance information--these are just a few of the varied topics the Memorial Hall Library reference librarians deal with daily through Reference services. Information about local services--how to find, for example, day care or a specific support group--is available through the community referral service, ANSWERS. An estimated quarter of the library's patrons come for reference material or with reference questions; the department answers requests both in person and by telephone. Use of reference services has increased markedly over the past few years: in 1978, the department answered 13,422 inquiries; in 1988, 25,255.



*A young patron at the Wilson Disc*

*Reference Librarian*



*Reference desk*

In addition to its print indexes, Reference offers two computerized periodical indexes. INFOTRAC II is a computerized subject index to articles published in more than 400 of the most popular and widely-read magazines, and in the New York Times over its most current 60-day period. Wilson Disc marries personal computer and compact disc technologies to search eight different periodical indexes, from the general Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature to the specialized, including the Business Periodical and General Science indexes. Both INFOTRAC II and the Wilson Disc are used directly by the patron, with help available, if needed, from the reference staff.

Local and national newspapers dating from the mid-eighteen-hundreds and many older editions of popular magazines can be found in the library on microfilm or microfiche; readers and reader/printers for both are available in Reference.

Memorial Hall Library boasts large and comprehensive business and law (state and federal) collections. Also among the library's especially strong subject areas are biography, arts, crafts, travel and cooking. Music has its own separate room, notable both for its full selection of LPs, Compact Discs and cassettes, and for the local displays of original art that grace its walls.



*Circulation desk: 1940's*

At present, the library's collection includes more than 200,000 books, 5,000 paperbacks, 6,000 sound recordings, 450 current magazines and newspapers, 300 pieces of art, 4,000 reels of microfilm and 600 videocassettes. The Circulation Department in 1988 circulated more than 355,000 items. Today, not only printed matter leaves the building, but records and cassettes, compact discs, VCRs and videotapes, projectors, 16 mm. films, slides, talking books for the sight-impaired, large-print books, magnifying readers, framed prints, works of sculpture, original art, maps, and even a personal computer.



*Circulation desk today*



The responsibility for acquiring, cataloging and keeping inventory on all these diverse materials lies with the Automation and Technical Services Department, a vital part of the library that the patron never sees. In 1988, the department processed 7,500 books, 550 sound recordings, and all of the other print and non-print material acquired. The operations in Technical Services are highly automated: books are ordered directly from the vendor through an on-line acquisition system and, in cataloging, machine-readable records are created and indexed for the public access terminals. The department also bar-codes all materials to be circulated, so that the library can maintain a detailed record of all transactions by patrons.



## CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The always-bustling Children's Room at Memorial Hall, located on the lower level, serves children from infancy through sixth grade. Weekday mornings belong to the little ones: there are story hours in the Activity Room for preschoolers and, in the winter, for toddlers and their parents; also, on Friday mornings in the fall and winter, young audiences fill the upstairs Memorial Hall upstairs for "Films on Friday."

Morning story hours and films for the Littlest Listeners are also complemented by an evening story hour, "Pajama Party." Puppet shows, crafts, and other programs and events are scheduled during vacation times.

In the afternoons, school-aged children hunch over homework at the Children's Room's tables, or search the reference collection for help with their papers and reports. These older children also enjoy their own slate of programs at the Children's Room during the summer months.



The Children's Room circulated more than 131,752 items in 1988. Young patrons checked out books, records, magazines, puzzles, book/cassette read-alongs, games, "Questron" electronic-wand workbook kits, and "Getting Better Boxes"--kits filled with materials to keep youngsters of varying ages busy during convalescence. Also served were parents, who borrowed books from a special shelf featuring child guidance material, and nursery school/daycare personnel--for whom the children's librarian prepared "Litkits," pre-assembled selections of approximately twenty books each under such headings as "Town and Country" and "Hooray for Me."

The Children's Room at Memorial Hall Library is, in short, many things--watching tropical fish or the house hamster, sharing a treasured shell collection, cuddling with "Koko," the stuffed gorilla, listening to tapes with earphones or investigating topics for the science fair. Perhaps most important, it is finding a really satisfying book to curl up with.





## REACHING OUT

In 1967, in an effort to improve and enhance library service, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts developed a regionalized system for funding its libraries. Memorial Hall Library became the headquarters of one of the seven subregions in the Eastern Massachusetts Regional Library System; as such, it receives state funds for personnel, materials and vehicles. In turn, Andover provides reference, interlibrary loan and delivery services to the town libraries of Amesbury, Boxford, West Boxford, Essex, Georgetown, Gloucester, Groveland, Hamilton, Haverhill, Ipswich, Lawrence, Manchester, Merrimac, Methuen, Middleton, Newbury, Newburyport, North Andover, North Reading, Rockport, Rowley, Salisbury, Topsfield, Wenham and West Newbury, as well as Lowell, Tewksbury, Billerica, Bedford, Dracut, Dunstable, Chelmsford, Westford, Tynsborough, Burlington and Carlisle.

*Signing of the Sub-regional contract, June 11, 1967. Left to right, seated: Richard J. Sullivan, Chairman of the Board of Library Commissioners; Cornelia Fitts, Memorial Hall Library Trustee. Standing: A.J. Anderson, Associate Director; Richard J. I. Bowen, Andover Town Manager; Harriet Gilcreast, first Interlibrary Loan Librarian; Miriam Putnam, Director, Memorial Hall Library.*

Memorial Hall is the center for the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVLCC), an automated library network that it established in 1982. This computer linkage puts the catalogs of other member libraries at the fingertips of Andover staff, greatly enhancing the capacity for quick local interlibrary loan. The library also belongs to state and national networks, through which staff may search for material anywhere within the region, the state, or the country. Memorial Hall patrons borrowed more than 1000 items per month through interlibrary loan systems in fiscal year 1988.



*Today's Eastern Massachusetts Regional Library System van*



*1940 Bookmobile*

Memorial Hall Library has been the recipient of Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) grants from the federal government through the approval of the State Board of Library Commissioners. The initial funding for the ANSWERS program, computers for the automation systems plus CD Rom technology for the public, the purchase of how-to videos and old radio show cassettes, and video production for library promotion are some of the areas that have benefitted from these funds.

## BALLARDVALE

From 1878, before the Ballardvale Branch of Memorial Hall Library came into being, area residents had the free use of the library of a local mill owner. The Branch opened in 1913, and has been in operation since, except for a hiatus in 1980 when the Community Services building in which it was housed was condemned. Adjusting to smaller rented quarters, the library has continued on a more limited basis. Reference services, books and periodicals are available during the two afternoons and evenings a week it is open.



*Ballardvale Librarian Ruth Sharpe*

*"The Memorial Hall, with its relics and tablets, has gradually given way during the years in importance to Memorial Hall LIBRARY, the conservator of cultural and human values..."*

--Miriam Putnam, 1946

## A GOOD CITIZEN

The library cooperates with community groups, local garden clubs, colleges and organizations such as the League of Women Voters to provide public interest programs. It also provides meeting space: civic groups often use, according to the size of their memberships, the Hall, the Activity Room, or the smaller meeting rooms. All floors in the building are handicapped-accessible by ramp or elevator.

Throughout the years, the library has sponsored activities for all ages: concerts, monthly art exhibits, receptions for international students, lectures and exhibits on topics ranging from taxes to solar energy, and seminars on English Literature. There are film programs for the general public, as well as specialized programs for children, teenagers, senior citizens and residents of housing projects. Memorial Hall also publishes services materials ranging from book lists to guides to area day care and volunteer opportunities.



Memorial Hall Library boasts a large and active "Friends of the Library" support membership. Regular volunteers deliver books to shut-ins, and work weekly in the main library. Others spend large amounts of time preparing for the annual used book sale. The group contributes generously to library activities and programs, and for such special purchases as artworks and passes for all major area museums, which are lent free to local residents.

## MEMORIAL HALL LIBRARY

Elm Square  
Andover, Ma. 01810  
475 - 6960  
ANSWERS: 470 - 1184

Hours: Monday - Friday 9 - 9  
Saturday 9 - 5  
Sunday 2 - 5  
Summer Schedule:  
Monday - Friday 9 - 9  
Closed Weekends

Ballardvale Branch  
195 Andover Street  
Andover, Ma. 01810  
(508) 470 - 2255

Hours: Monday & Thursday 2 - 5; 6 - 8

*Photographs for this book contributed by the Andover Historical Society,  
Richard Graber, Michael Frishman, Memorial Hall Library staff, and the library archives*

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Memorial Hall Library  
Andover, Massachusetts